

Gay, lesbian arts fest opens today Plays, films, concert among events; artwork to be shown

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OutArt 99, Oklahoma's first major gay and lesbian arts festival, will take place in Oklahoma City today through Sunday.

The works of many local gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans gendered artists will be on display and for sale. There will also be showings of 10 recently released feature films, two plays and a concert.

The festival will kick off with a formal dinner gala at 6:30 tonight at Regal Windsor Hills Theater at NW 23 and Meridian.

The festival coincides with both National Coming Out Day and Gay and Lesbian History Month.

Borders Books will display work by OutArt artists during October. The artists participating are Randall Bourne, Clint Thomas, John De Vault, Helenna Hennesey, Mark Maxey, Jaime Moomey, Joe Dale Tate Nevaquaya, Brian Palmer, Tim Poindexter, J&J Soulmate, Innovative Designs, Vertigo 2000, Christian Byrd and Tom Webster. These artists work in various media, ranging from graphic arts, leather, photography, oils, glass and pen and ink.

Two theatrical shows and a concert will be presented at The Copa in the Habana Inn, 2200 NW 39 Expressway.

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At 2 p.m. Saturday is the Oklahoma premiere of "Tails From the Closet." Sponsors said the show is a collection of comical skits that takes a funny outlook at the gay life from inside and outside the community. "Tails" was put together by Oklahoma writers Amy West, David Rudnick, Lane Fields, Timothy Stewart and Robert Matson.

Along with the writing team, the company of actors consists of Tanya Hornish, Enoch Elms, Bert Ballou, Lin Hartgrove, Karola Schwartz, Tara Henry and a special guest performance by Ginger Lamarr.

The second show will be the local hit "Drama Queens" at 2 p.m. Sunday in the Copa. peeks inside a chorus boy's dressing room before and after the curtain falls. Brenda S. Williams, a long-time actress at the Pollard Theatre, will direct this all-male comedy.

Cast members are Ben Williams, Timothy Stewart, James A. Hughes, Alan Brawner, Rudy Cooper, Chris Castleberry, Jake De Tommaso, Vince Kniffin and Michael Greene.

The concert "Musically Out" will be performed at 4 p.m. Saturday.

Ten films will be shown at Regal Windsor Hills Theater at NW 23 and Meridian as part of the festival. They are:

- "Edge of Seventeen," as part of the opening gala at 7 tonight.

- "Different for Girls" at 4 p.m. Saturday.

- "Bedrooms and Hallways" at 7 p.m. Saturday.

- "Out of Season" at 7 p.m. Saturday.

- "Hard" at 9 p.m. Saturday.

- "Razor Blade Smile" at 9 p.m. Saturday.

- "Like It Is" at 5 p.m. Sunday.

- "When Love Comes" at 5 p.m. Sunday.

- "Broadway Damage" at 7 p.m. Sunday.

- "It's in the Water" at 7 p.m. Sunday.

Tickets for art displays are free. Films shown during the festival are \$8 per person. Tickets for each play or the concert are \$10 each.

Admission to the black-tie opening night banquet and a screening of "Edge of Seventeen" are \$35 per person. Formal dress is requested. A special festival package for \$82 includes tickets to the entire festival, including the dinner, both plays, the concert and four movies.

Tickets are available at Jungle Red, located in the Habana Inn at 2200 NW 39th Expressway; Collectibles, Etc., 1516 NW 23; Diversity Coffeeshoppe, 1739 NW 16, and New Leaf Florist, 9219 N Pennsylvania. To buy tickets from outside the Oklahoma City area, call Global Travel Network at (800) 721-8866.

An artists reception will be held at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at The Copa.

The Oklahoma City Art Museum's Film Series will present a special program at 2:30 p.m. every Sunday in October. "Coming Out Under Fire," a 1994 black-and-white film, documents the experiences of nine gay and lesbian veterans. Combining declassified documents, rare archival footage, interviews and photographs, the film returns to World War II where the current "don't ask, don't tell" policy originated. The film won a Special Jury Award at the 1994 Sundance Film Festival.

The Oklahoma Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus will meet at 7 p.m. Monday at The Copa. There will be a special program of speakers and entertainment, hosted by John Beebe. The general public is invited. Admission is \$5.

For more information, call 752-2762 or see the Web site at www.gayokc.com/outart99. Outside Oklahoma City, call (800) 722-8866 for tickets and hotel package information.

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